

Zion Church
Near Columbia, Tennessee

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Tennessee

Historic American Buildings Survey
J. Frazer Smith, District Officer
W. Jeter Eason, Deputy District Officer
404 Goodwyn Inst. Bldg., Memphis, Tenn.

ADDENDUM

FOLLOWS...

"ZION CHURCH"
Near Columbia, Maury County, Tennessee.

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Owner. Zion Church Congregation

Date of Erection. 1849

Architect. Committee composed of Rev. James Arnell,
Samuel H. Armstrong and John D. Fleming.

Builder. Zion Presbyterian Church.

Present Condition. Zion Church is in the hands of
an intelligent and interested congregation who is
preserving the building in a careful manner.

Number of Stories. First floor, gallery and base-
ment.

Material on Construction. Foundations of stone and
brick. Floors - hand hewn joists, pine flooring.
Exterior walls solid brick. At present composition
roof. Cedar lintels over windows and openings.

Other Existing Records. In addition to this survey
recorded in the "History of the Presbyterian Church
of South Carolina" George Howe, D.D., also the records
of the Church itself. Also, recorded in "Historic
Sketch of Zion Church and Genealogy of the Frierson
Family" by W. S. Fleming 1807. Also, short account
in the "History of Homes and Gardens of Tennessee"
published by the Parthenon Press, Nashville 1936.

Additional Data. In no way has any building played
more part in the development of middle Tennessee than
the activities that were housed in the present Zion
Church and the buildings which preceded it, and erect-
ed by the same families and their predecessors. In
order that the importance of Zion Church might be
shown in this report, it is necessary that we go back
a few years prior to the actual building of this
church and brief its activities and the peoples who
brought about this building and the influence that
they had upon the development and upon the politics
and upon the society and upon the education and re-
ligion that grew in the rich fertile valley south of
Nashville, Tennessee.

In 1730 to 1734 there settled in Williamsburg, South
Carolina a number of families, Irish Presbyterians,
headed by the Witherspoons, Flemings, Jameses and
William Friersons. William Frierson was probably the
leader and the inspiration of these early settlers.

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Soon after they settled, and at the same time that they were clearing this great wilderness for the purpose of farming, they were also planning, and did erect in 1807, the first Meeting House - the first Zion Church. After the erection of Zion Church, and after three years worship in this building, the conscience of the white settlers dictated to them that they had neglected giving educational and religious aid to their slaves and so in 1810 Zion Church took into its congregation and in the Ordinance of Baptism the slaves of the members of that Church. Two years later, 1812, and after they had struggled along without any definite Pastor, Rev. James W. Stephenson was engaged at a salary of \$175.00 per year to be a full time Pastor. It might be said at this time that Mr. Stephenson was

not wholly dependent on his salary for sustenance. Through the direction of Rev. Stephenson, and through the industry of the white settlers, Zion Church grew as did the entire community to the point where in 1813 the first Meeting House, a log structure, was deemed inadequate for the proper functioning of the Church and was replaced by a brick building. "This was a brick structure of curious architectural design". "We have it from 'tradition of the Elders' that it had two doors, one on each side of the Pulpit which was located in the north end of the building, and two doors in the south end of the building, for the exit and entrance of the white members of the community; and that on the East and West sides of the building, wings were built, which opened into the building, these wings being for the seating of the negro slaves, members of the Congregation. They entered these wings through doors from the East and from the West. The main part of the structure was floored; the wings had a dirt floor except that the seats were raised upon puncheons. The material for building it was apportioned among the members according to their taxable slaves, and the old Chronicler gives the exact amount apportioned to each one, in his account. This old Church served the purpose of the Congregation until the present brick structure was completed".

During the life-time of the first brick structure between 1813 to 1849, Zion Church assumed the biggest part in the civil as well as religious activities of the community. "Sessions of Zion Church" was the Supreme Court of the community. The Church was the State and "settled all differences without appeal to the Civil Courts, with few exceptions". Rules and regulations that were established and enforced by the Sessions of Zion Church were the code under which the people lived and it was to this Session that every one, even the slaves, appealed and many accounts are found telling of the firm but fair rulings that were handed down, sometimes in favor of the slaves against the Master, which, of course, was an unusual thing to happen in the South before the Civil War. "On the 30th of November, 1846, it was reported that \$4,000.00 had been subscribed, and after some discussion as to the site for the new building, it was definitely resolved to build the new Church immediately north of the old Church, outside of the then enclosure, and to extend the old Church yard so as to enclose the new edifice when it shall have been erected" The Committee consisting of Rev. James M. Arnell, Samuel H. Armstrong and John D. Fleming, was appointed to design a plan for the new edifice, to be submitted at the occasion of its next meeting. Two plans were

submitted by this Committee, substantially the same, except one provided for having an open vestibule with columns extending to the roof of the building, and the other to have an open vestibule with columns extending only so high as to allow the gallery above. This last plan was adopted, for the reason that the room in the gallery was necessary for the accommodation of the black people. The Church as erected is 30' long x 50' broad, three stories high including the basement, the second story for the white people, and the third story or gallery for the black people; with an open vestibule of 24' in front and 10' in width to the wall; with two large doors for entrance into the Church, with two square brick pillars in front running up to the commencement of the gallery to support the same; and four large windows on each side of the Church, extending into the gallery, with plain frames and cedar lintels with rose blocks. The pews were located after the erection of the Church, as they now are, and were selected by the members of the Congregation by lot, each pew having rental value fixed upon it for the support of the Pastor, their aggregate value being about \$800.00 The only difference in the internal arrangement of the Church between then and now was that the choir formerly stood at the rear of the Church facing the Pulpit. This was changed some twenty years ago in accord with modern notions (1887), and the organ and choir are now located at the rear of the Pulpit, a beautiful pipe organ having been bought to take the place of an older one, about eight years ago (1889)".

The present Zion Church was first occupied Saturday April 7th, 1843 at 11:00 A.M. and the first sermon was preached by Rev. N. A. Penlam of Tusculum, Alabama, on that same date, the sermon being taken from the twenty fourth chapter of Matthew: twelfth verse. The materials which were bought cost about \$5,000.00 and the slave labor which was donated by the slave owners of the Congregation is estimated to be worth about \$2,000.00 giving the Church an approximate value of \$7,000.00. Some time that same year more land north of the Church was bought to be used as burial ground for the colored members of the Congregation.


"It was until recently (about 1906) surrounded by a stone wall, built in 1887. In the year 1903, Mrs. Ed. Armstrong, formerly Addie V. Frierson, died, and being possessed of considerable means, bequeathed \$2,500.00 to Zion Church for the purpose of having a handsome iron fence built around the Church Yard, which was so run as to embrace more ground for burial purposes; the corner posts are constructed of stone,

and also the gate posts, in one of which is inserted a marble tablet by order of the Sessions in the memory of the deed. The old stone wall was used in macadamizing the roads leading from the Church in all directions. All in all, it is a beautiful spot carpeted with blue grass and adorned with handsome marble shafts".

Zion Church is still in active use by the Presbyterians in that community and in its burial grounds are buried most of the important people for the past one hundred and thirty years of that community. The names that predominate in the burial grounds are those of Frierson, Armstrong and Fleming, but the most often repeated on the tombstones is the name of "Frierson" for of those eight original families that came from South Carolina five of them were the sons and daughters of William Frierson, one of the first to come to America.

* * * * *

All of the above sentences and phrases in quotation marks were taken from an address delivered by Chancellor William S. Fleming, September 13, 1907 on the occasion of Zion Church Centennial Celebration. This address was printed under the name of "Historic Sketch of Zion Church and Genealogy of the Frierson Family". The materials which Chancellor Fleming used to compile his book were taken from "History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina" by George Howe, D. D., and from the records of Zion Church which have been carefully preserved from the birth of the Church. Very few copies of this address are in existence but the one furnished for this survey was lent by Major Horace Frierson, Attorney General, Middle District of Tennessee, Columbia, Tennessee, a direct descendant of William Frierson, foremost member of the original settlers.


DEPUTY DISTRICT OFFICER HABS

ADDENDUM

Reviewed July 1, 1936, TFW.

Zion Church (Presbyterian)
Route 1, one mile south of Highway 99
at a point 6.3 miles west of Columbia
Columbia Vicinity
Maury County
Tennessee

HABS No. TENN-64

An Addendum to
Zion Church
Columbia Vicinity, Maury County
Tennessee
in HABS Catalog (1941)

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ZION CHURCH (PRESBYTERIAN)

An addendum to
Zion Church
Columbia Vicinity, Maury County
Tennessee
in HABS Catalog (1941)

Location: Route 1, one mile south of Highway 99 at a point
6.3 miles west of Columbia, Columbia Vicinity,
Maury County, Tennessee
Latitude: 35°35'56" Longitude: 87°07'30"

Present Owner: Zion Presbyterian Church

Present Occupant: Zion Presbyterian Church congregation

Present Use: Sanctuary

Statement of
Significance: This church building reflects in its severe style
the stern tenets of the Presbyterian community for
which it was built in 1849. Its structural adorn-
ment is limited to a stepped gable and a deeply
recessed open vestibule, both of which are
frequently found on houses of the period in Middle
Tennessee. In continuous use since its construction--
and little changed since that time--the building is
an interesting example of rural church architecture
in the South.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1849.
2. Architect: Designed by a Committee consisting of the
Reverend James M. Arnell, Samuel H. Armstrong, and John
D. Fleming.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Zion Church stands on
land that is part of the eight square miles purchased
from General Nathaniel /local spelling--the General's
name is usually spelled Nathanael/ Greene's heirs in
1807 for \$15,360. General Greene had received a grant
of 25,000 acres from the State of North Carolina in
1784, for his services in the Revolution. The land was
purchased by eleven Presbyterian families who had come

as a colony from South Carolina to Maury County, Tennessee, in 1806-07. The tract of eight square miles contained 5,120 acres, bought for \$3.00 an acre. The actual purchase was consummated by Mr. George Dickey, who was sent by the community to buy the property from General Greene's heirs and devisees--located on Cumberland Island, near the mouth of St. Mary's River and the Florida border. The deed, which is in the possession of the Church, is dated November 7, 1807, and was signed by "Catharine Miller (late Catharine Greene), Martha W. Nightingale, Peyton Skipwith and Cornelia L. Skipwith, his wife, Nathaniel R. Greene and Louisa C. Greene, heirs and devisees of General Nathaniel Greene, late of Camden County, State of Ga."

The present church had two predecessors on the site--a log house erected within one week in August, 1807, and a brick building whose cornerstone was laid on August 5, 1812. The logs from the 1807 church were reused in a house which still stands at 909 West Seventh Street in Columbia, Tennessee. The brick building was completed by the spring of 1813. In the 1840s the congregation decided to build a new church, and a fund was started for the purpose.

The following is taken from a Historical Sketch of Zion Church by W. S. Fleming:

On November 30, 1846, it was reported that \$4,000 had been subscribed, and after some discussion as to the site of the new building, it was definitely resolved to build the new church immediately north of the old church outside the then enclosure, and to extend the old church yard so as to enclose the new edifice when it shall have been erected. The Committee consisting of the Reverend James M. Arnell, Samuel H. Armstrong, and John D. Fleming, was appointed to design a plan for the new edifice to be submitted at the occasion of the next annual meeting. Two plans were submitted by this Committee, substantially the same, except one provided for having an open vestibule with columns extending to the roof of the building, and the other to have an open vestibule with columns extending only so high as to allow the gallery above. The last plan was adopted for the reason that the room in the gallery was necessary for the accommodation of the black people. The church as erected is 80 feet long by 50 broad, three stories high including the basement, the second story for the white people, and the third story a gallery for the black people; with an open vestibule of 34 feet

in front and 10 feet in width to the wall, with two large doors for entrance into the church, with two square brick pillars in front running up to the commencement of the gallery to support the same, and four large windows on each side of the church extending into the gallery, with plain frames and cedar lintels, with rose blocks.

The only difference in the internal arrangement of the church between then and now, was that the choir formerly stood at the rear of the church facing the pulpit. This was changed some twenty years ago (c. 1887) in accord with modern notions. And the organ and choir is now located in the rear of the pulpit, a beautiful pipe organ having been bought about eight years ago /1899/.

The new church was occupied for the first time on Saturday, April 7, 1849, at 11 a.m.--the day before the Spring Communion. The first sermon was preached by the Reverend N. A. Penlam of Tuscumbia, Alabama. His sermon was based on Matt. 24:12, "And because wickedness is multiplied, most men's love will grow cold."

Mr. Frierson, a member of the Zion community, estimated that the materials in the church had cost about \$5,000 and that the slave labor donated by the owners was worth about \$2,000, thus giving the church a value of about \$7,000.

4. Alterations and additions: A stone wall completed on May 28, 1867, surrounded the churchyard and cemetery, replacing an earlier plank fence. The perimeter was 1876 feet. In 1903 Mrs. Ed Armstrong (born Addie V. Frierson) left \$2,500 to Zion Church in her will, for the purpose of building an iron fence around the churchyard. This fence was completed in 1906.

The hand-carved pulpit was built c. 1891 by James R. Lanius, husband of Amelia Frierson and a member of the church; under Mr. Lanius's direction, woodworkers built three ministers' chairs, which match the pulpit.

The church windows were originally clear glass. W. S. Fleming indicates that in 1887 "The church auditorium was remodeled and redecorated, pews cushioned, the cushions were made by the women, and leaded stained glass windows replaced the old windows." Described as Tiffany windows, they were made in New England and purchased through an agent c. 1889 by the committee set up in 1887 to oversee the remodeling. (Publications listing church

windows made by the Tiffany Studios include no mention of the Zion Church windows.) The memorial window on the west side was given in memory of Frederick H. Watkins and Margaret Ann Watkins. Mr. Watkins died in 1895, and Mrs. Watkins, his second wife, died in 1879. When the clear glass was replaced by stained glass in the side windows and in the three-part center window above the first-floor porch, it was not replaced in the two upper windows flanking that center window. From the ground below, the sash and clear glass panes can still be seen through the slanted slats of the shutters. Some years ago, these two windows in the gallery were covered with heavy canvas, painted to match the walls of the interior. When the canvas was removed, the original clear panes were revealed. Still in place, they are now concealed on the inside by plasterboard painted to conform with the interior of the church.

A tracker organ built by Pilcher of Louisville, Kentucky, was installed on November 2, 1899. In a poem entitled "Unbiased," Louisa Goode Watkins Fulton mentions the use of the organ at her wedding on November 22, 1899. Minutes of the Congregation for December 1900 include a report of the Organ Committee that \$900 had been voluntarily subscribed and paid for the new organ. The organ was originally hand pumped. Around 1932, after electricity had been brought to the building, a motor was installed in the basement, which supplied air for the air chamber by means of a blower.

Minutes of the Congregation include a report of December 15, 1908, indicating that a concrete floor had been laid in the vestibule, replacing the original floor of bricks.

In 1922, when a toilet was installed on the first floor under each stairway, doors were cut through from the stair vestibules into the sanctuary.

A coal burning furnace was installed in the basement in 1923, at a cost of \$394, including chimney; in 1947, a heating system which utilized coal oil was installed; in 1972, the system was changed to propane gas. A line installed in 1928 brought electric current to the church. Wiring was completed in 1930, and the chandeliers-- which originally burned kerosene and hung low enough to be lighted from below--were converted to electricity and were raised closer to the ceiling. The bill for the first month's electricity amounted to \$1.50 and was paid May 26, 1930. Air conditioning was installed in 1965.

In 1972, a brick addition was constructed at the rear of the church. This addition contains a choir room, Pastor's Study, eight Sunday School classrooms, a storage room, and two toilet rooms. Two doors were opened through the north wall of the church to provide access to the annex. Upon completion of the annex, two pews were removed from each of the "Amen Corners" in the sanctuary and placed in annex classrooms.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

In 1730 the Council of South Carolina, in order to offset the rapidly growing slave population and to strengthen its frontiers, enacted a plan for settling white colonists in the province. Ten townships, each about twenty miles square, were laid out on the river banks some sixty miles from "Charles Town." One of these was the Williamsburg District, located a few miles above the tidewater section on the Black River in the lower pine belt. Among the Scotch-Irish colonists arriving in 1732 and 1734 (having been imported as settlers by South Carolina's immigration agents), were Witherspoons, Armstrongs, Wilsons, and Friersons--all families whose names would become significant in the Zion community in Tennessee.

The original settlers of Williamsburg had come there to better themselves economically. In fact, they were called "Poor Protestants," and continued to be referred to as such in South Carolina records up until the time of the Revolution. They were given provisions by the Council for the first year. These provisions included Indian corn, rice, wheat, flour, beef, pork, rum, and salt. Each hand over sixteen years of age was furnished with an axe and a broad and narrow hoe.

In 1736, these settlers formed the Williamsburg Presbyterian Congregation and petitioned South Carolina for land on which to build a church. They were given two acres on which they built a log church. This served them until 1746, when they built a more commodious structure--the largest building in the township until the Revolutionary War. This congregation was organized according to the constitution and discipline of the Church of Scotland. Its rule was very strict: sinners stood trial and were censured, and the Sabbath was strictly kept. It was the religious, judicial, and social center of the community.

In the 1770s there was a large influx of Irish settlers to Williamsburg. These people were more liberal in their theological views than the earlier settlers. A faction soon developed in the church. As the liberal faction soon outnumbered the conservative minority, the minority withdrew to form a separate congregation. Bitterness grew between the

rival churches, and when the minority, during an August night in 1786, razed the old church, the majority sought legal redress. The state sided with the majority, forcing the minority to pay for their August escapade.

The minority placed themselves under the Presbyterian of South Carolina, which was connected with the Synod of Philadelphia, and became the Bethel Congregation. The friction between the two Presbyterian churches did not abate. This unpleasantness in the community was the chief reason for the migration of the major part of the Bethel Church between 1805 and 1815. There were other incentives for migration--the good land had become exhausted, the climate was unhealthy, and opportunities for advancement were slight.

On March 25, 1805, Moses G. Frierson, James Armstrong, James Blakeley, Paul Fulton and their families started to Tennessee. Six weeks later they arrived in the neighborhood of Nashville, where they set up temporary cabins. In the fall they moved to the Franklin area, where they rented farms for themselves and the other families whom they expected to join them. In March of the following year, John Dickey, Mrs. Margaret Frierson, Samuel Frierson, Thomas Stephenson, William Frierson, William James Frierson, Samuel Witherspoon, Elias Frierson, Mrs. Mary Fleming, John White Stephenson and their families left South Carolina and arrived near Franklin in the middle of April. After their arrival a meeting was called to decide on a place of permanent settlement. Because they were not able to find enough land with clear titles on the Duck or Elk Rivers, they decided to approach the Greene heirs regarding the purchase of a portion of the General Greene tract.

When the heads of families went down to look over and to divide their new lands, they took with them enough assistance to erect a log house as a House of Worship. They had no regular preacher until 1809, when the Reverend James W. Stephenson moved to the neighborhood.

The old log church had a large fireplace at one end, where huge fires were kept burning in cold weather. In his Historical Sketch of Maury County, W. S. Fleming says

The women with little children were seated nearest the fireplace--the old men were honored with seats near the wall where they could lean back--the young men and young ladies next in front of them, and the boys of restless, unruly age were placed in the center, where batteries of eyes could play on them from all quarters.

When the second and more permanent church was begun, building materials were apportioned according to the taxable slaves

held by each member. The church was described by T. F. Stephenson as "a most unusual structure with a body made of brick and wings made of wood extending the entire length of the building. The main building was floored with brick; the wings (for slaves) had only dirt floors." This building served the prospering Presbyterian community until the present building was completed in 1849.

The communicants of Zion Church were prosperous people. They figured prominently in the development of the area in every way, and many of their descendants continue to occupy similar roles in the religious, cultural, economic, political, and social life of Maury County. Many of the sturdy houses built around the same time as the church, by its members, still stand in the Zion Community.

An interesting personage associated with Zion was its first pastor, Dr. James White Stephenson. Dr. Stephenson was also the instructor at the Academy which stood near the church. He had earlier taught a classical school near the old Waxhaw Church in South Carolina, where Andrew Jackson studied under him for a short time. James K. Polk, a future president of the United States, enrolled under Dr. Stephenson at the age of seventeen. Along with their academic studies, the reverend doctor made sure his pupils were trained in honesty, integrity, and the golden rule.

Henry Pilcher (1798-1880), the Englishman whose firm built the Zion Church organ, arrived in New York in 1832, where he worked for a time in the factory of Henry Erben, the pre-eminent organ builder in America. He and his family lived in St. Louis from 1852-1862, where they had both a store and a factory--the factory being devoted entirely to the manufacture of organs. After his retirement in 1858, the firm was directed by his sons--Henry, Jr., William, and Robert--and later his grandsons, under the name Henry Pilcher's Sons. The Pilcher organ factory, removed to Chicago in 1862 or 1863, was destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871. After this disaster, the main Pilcher factory was located in Louisville, Kentucky. The interests of the Pilcher firm were purchased by M. P. Moller, Inc. (Hagerstown, Maryland), in 1944.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Armstrong, Miss Emma Porter, Registrar-at-Large, Maury County Court House, Columbia, Tennessee 38401.
(Miss Armstrong has many records of Zion Church, as her mother was Church Historian for more than 35 years.)

Brown, Cornelia Stephenson, Member of Zion Congregation and Church Historian, to HABS, March 1977, April 25, and June 18, 1977, Administrative files, National Park Service, Washington, D. C.

Brown, Samuel Tennant (Clerk of the Zion Session since 1946, President of the Zion Cemetery Association, and Supervisor of the Zion Cemetery), Route 4, Box 369, Columbia, Tennessee 38401.

Fulton, David Franklin, Clerk of the Zion Congregation, to HABS, May 12, June 11, July 27, September 12, and October 24, 1977, Administrative files, National Park Service, Washington, D. C.

Joint University Library (JUL), Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee. Zion Church, Session Minutes 1858, p. 63. (Microfilm.)

_____. Zion Congregational Minute Book 2, pp. 87, 95, 206, 211, 214, 246, 261, 301, 307, 637. (Microfilm.)

_____. Zion Treasurer's Book for 1930, p. 175. (Microfilm.)

Maury County, Tennessee. Register of Deed's Office. Deed Book F, page 199.

Zion Church. Deed dated November 7, 1807.

_____. Plat of the Zion Church Cemetery, prepared 1954-57 and completed for the Church's Sesquicentennial celebration on June 30, 1957; continuously updated since that time. An alphabetical list of names derived from the plat, with row number of the graves, grave number within the rows, and dates of birth and death, is located in glass case across the back wall of Zion Church vestibule.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Fleming, W. S. Historical Sketch of Zion Church, Maury County, Tennessee and The Genealogy of the Frierson Family, 1730-1887, compiled by Chancellor William S. Fleming. Columbia, Tennessee: Aydelott's Printery, 1907, pp. 25, 33, 43-45.

Fulton, Louisa Goode Watkins. "Unbiased." Magnificent Investment. Nashville, Tennessee: Parthenon Press, 1971, p. 46.

Highsaw, Mary Wagner. "A History of Zion Community in Maury County 1806-60." Tennessee Historical Quarterly, Vol. V (March, 1946), pp. 18-22.

Ochse, Orpha. The History of the Organ in the United States. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1975.

Tiffany Studios. A List of Windows, and Extracts from Letters and Newspapers. New York: Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company, c. 1897. (Located in Avery Library, Columbia University, New York, New York.)

_____. A Partial List of Windows Designed and Executed by Tiffany Studios. New York, 1915. Correct date is probably 1910. (Located in Boston Public Library, Boston, Mass.)

_____. List of Tiffany Windows. Watertown, Mass.: Tiffany Press, 229 Coolidge Avenue, Watertown, Mass. 02172, 1973. (A reprint of the 1915 edition, above.)

Prepared by John W. Kiser
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
Summer 1971

Ursula Theobald
Writer-Editor
National Park Service
Spring 1977

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: An interesting example of rural church architecture in the South, this otherwise simple structure is adorned with a stepped gable and recessed vestibule--features commonly found on the mid-19th-century houses of Middle Tennessee.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This rectangular structure is 50'-1" wide (three bays) x 80'-4" (five bays). It is one story high on a raised basement, with a one-story addition on the rear.

2. Foundations: Tennessee limestone ashlar laid in 7-inch courses.
3. Wall construction, finish, and color: Natural brick, 2.7" thick, laid in common bond. The addition at the rear is also brick. The walls of the porch are finished with stucco.
4. Structural system, framing: Solid load-bearing masonry walls, with a stepped gable on the south (front) facade. The stepped-gable ends rest on corbel tables of cut stone, and the corbie-steps are capped with slabs of stone. In the face of the gable, centered above the entrance porch, there is a granite table which is inscribed "Zion Church/ Built A.D. 1847." The star-shaped caps of eight iron tie-rod supports decorate the south facade. There is also a star-shaped cap on each of the side elevations, approximately four brick courses below the belt course, at a distance two feet from the south facade. A 5- $\frac{1}{2}$ " cut-stone belt course runs across the front facade at a height four brick courses above the porch lintel and flashing, and onto the side elevations for a short distance--from whence a brick belt course two bricks high continues along the sides of the building. Another brick belt course two bricks high runs across the front facade at eaves level. There are no belt courses on the rear elevation. A course of cut stone approximately five bricks in height is located just above the ashlar foundation on the front facade, and extends onto the side elevations for a distance of several feet.
5. Porches: A deeply recessed first-floor porch, or open vestibule, of three bays is located in the center of the south (front) facade. Two square columns in antis and a square pilaster on each side wall support a three-part entablature, and above, a wooden lintel with flashing. The columns and pilasters are made of brick that has been plastered and painted. They have square caps with convex echinus, and no bases. The porch measures 11'-7" x 28'-1"; the columns, 1'-10" square; and the pilasters, 22- $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 5- $\frac{1}{4}$ ". The ceiling of the porch slopes from 10'-10" to 10'-3", front to back. The walls of the porch are finished with plaster. Originally brick, the floor has been replaced with concrete.

The porch is reached via a stairway the width of the porch opening--consisting of a bottom step with a 16-inch tread, a concrete platform seven feet deep, and then a run of five stone steps. Two steps with 18-inch treads approach the platform from the east.

6. Chimneys: The four inside brick chimneys (two on each side elevation) appear to be flush with the side walls. The flues are built within the walls. An outside brick chimney has been added on the west side--approximately midway between the second and third windows--to vent the modern heating.

7. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Two 4' x 7' doorways enter the sanctuary from the recessed porch--one at the left end of the south wall; the other, the right end. The openings contain double wooden doors whose 2' x 7' leaves have four molded panels each, stacked vertically--the bottom panel measuring 17" x 15- $\frac{1}{2}$ "; and the other three, 9- $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 15- $\frac{1}{2}$ ". The doors are finished with 5- $\frac{1}{4}$ " molding.

In the southwest bay of the west wall, a recessed doorway (originally a slave entrance) enters a small vestibule which opens into the sanctuary. Approached from ground level by a wooden ramp with handrails, this doorway contains a wooden door with glazing in the upper section and has a wooden lintel with corner blocks and a stone sill. Its reveal and soffit are finished with molded wooden paneling.

The basement doorway is located on the east side, beneath the most southeasterly window of the double tier. It has a wooden lintel and sill and contains a pair of paneled wooden doors with clear glass in the upper section.

Two doorways opened in the north wall of the building in 1972, to provide access to the annex, are 36 inches wide, 78 inches high, and have 27-inch facings. The doors are wooden. One doorway is placed east of the organ loft, 21 inches from the east wall; the other, west of the organ loft, 21 inches from the west wall.

- b. Windows and shutters: There are two tiers of windows on the front facade and on the two side elevations (however, the two "windows" flanking the recessed first-floor porch on the front facade are sham windows whose louvered shutters are in permanently closed position and have no hinges--the masonry of the wall can be seen through the slanted louvers). There are no windows on the rear elevation. In general, the window openings measure 3'-10" x 8'-0", contain one-over-one double-hung wooden sash with operable one-panel, louvered wooden shutters, and have wooden sills and lintels. The

window lintels have corner blocks which are eight inches square.

On the front facade, the two second-tier windows which flank the three-part center stained-glass window, contain the original clear glass, arranged in nine-over-nine-light double-hung sash. On the outside, these two windows have permanently closed louvered shutters without hinges; on the interior, the glass is covered with plasterboard, painted to match the walls. The three-part, stained-glass window consists of a middle section of the general size, and narrow side sections--the overall measurement being 7'-4" x 8'-0". A wooden sill and lintel extend across the three-part arrangement.

On the side elevations, each tier consists of four leaded mosaic stained-glass windows which--except for one memorial window on the west side--are identical in their colors and almost identical in their pattern of geometric forms. These windows, and the three-part window on the front facade, are made up of orange, yellow, pink, blue, red, and green glass. The memorial window--the second window on the left as one enters the sanctuary from the south--is inscribed "In memory of/Frederick h Watkins &/Margaret A Watkins." It has a scenic design of sky, clouds, mountains, a river with reeds, and an anchor affixed to a large rock.

On the first-floor level, in the southeast bay, east elevation, there is a smaller window without shutters. This window contains red and blue glass around the edge, and frosted glass in the center. (Formerly a doorway, the lower section of the opening has been bricked in; however, the cut-stone sill for the original door is still in place and is identical with the sill under the corresponding door on the west elevation.)

At the basement level, there are two windows on the west elevation, and one on the east elevation--all containing clear glass.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape: A gable roof with composition shingles; a stepped gable on the front facade.
- b. Cornice: Boxed cornice. Fascia board on wall under the eaves. Gutters along roof edge on side elevations; six downspouts on side elevations--one at each corner, one beside the outside chimney on the west elevation, and one at approximately the same location on the east elevation.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: A partial basement under the front (south) end of the building contains the mechanical equipment room, a kitchen, a large meeting room, and toilets. The over-all measurement of the area is 34'-3" x 48'-5". There is an outside entrance in the east foundation wall. The basement floor is 18 inches below the door sill (grade) and 8'-4" below the first floor.
- b. First floor: The church auditorium or sanctuary is a large rectangular room with a raised pulpit at the north end and a continuous gallery on all but the pulpit wall. It is entered from the recessed porch via two doors in the south wall. The gallery is supported on each side of the auditorium by four unfluted 8-inch columns with capitals. The rear gallery is located over the recessed porch and its parapet is flush with the back of the porch. The side galleries are 10 feet deep; the rear gallery, 11 feet.

The rectangular ends of the front facade--one on either side of the recessed porch--each enclose a staircase to the gallery, a toilet room, and a vestibule which opens into the sanctuary. The vestibule in the southwest end also opens to the outside via a door in the west wall.

2. Stairways: There are two dog-leg wooden staircases--identical except for the direction of the turns. One is enclosed in the southeast corner of the building; the other in the southwest corner. Both start five feet from the inside of the south wall with one straight step, and with two winders reach the south wall; they then make a 90° turn against the south wall with four winders, thus reaching in 8 feet 6 inches the inside of the wall of the porch; then make another 90° turn with two winders to bring the staircase a full 180° from the original step. There are then two straight steps to a landing, from whence two additional steps lead to the floor of the south and side areas of the gallery. As they ascend to the gallery, each of the stairways winds around a small, first-floor toilet room.
3. Flooring: The flooring at auditorium level is wooden (yellow poplar) which has been covered with carpet. The basement floor is vinyl tile on concrete.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls and ceiling are painted plaster. A wainscoting of vertical boards to the height of the window sills is finished with a 1-½" chair rail.

5. Doorways and doors: Interior doors are wooden, each having five recessed panels.
6. Trim: The wooden parapet of the gallery is decorated with molded panels.
7. Fixtures: A bank of eleven fixed wooden pews with a partition down the middle fills the center of the auditorium. There is also a narrow bank of fourteen wooden pews along each side, under the gallery. Two aisles run between the banks of pews from the rear entrance doors to the pulpit at the front of the auditorium. On the right and left of the pulpit--and facing it--there were in 1971 three short rows of pews which ran parallel to the side walls. These were originally called "Amen Corners." (Two pews were removed from each side when the Sunday School annex was completed in 1972. One pew, with back to the wall, remains on each side.)

The hand-carved walnut pulpit has a raised platform with a wooden screen at the back. On the platform there are three ministers' chairs of walnut and a lectern--all having Gothic details. The screen has at each end a 9" x 9" carved wooden post which serves as a pedestal for a lamp. Two wooden rails run between the posts. The carved lower rail is supported by balusters. The upper rail with its scalloped trim has immediately beneath it a metal rail from which a heavy curtain is suspended on metal rings. Behind the screen, a medium-size tracker pipe organ dominates the north wall. Built c. 1882 by Henry Pilcher's Sons of Louisville, the organ's Gothic-style case and twenty-one facade pipes are heavily decorated with painted designs. An inscription on the back of the small door which provides access to the rear of the organ reads: "Installed by Pilcher, Louisville, Ky/ Nov 2 1899/ assisted by R. G. Walker and/ James A. Fleming."

On the front wall, on each side of the organ, is a wooden hymn board having the appearance of a flat "aedicule" with colonettes and a triangular pediment. A two-step stairway penetrates the platform at each end. Behind the screen, a three-step stairway with an 8" x 8" newel post, balusters, and a handrail ascends to the organ enclosure from each side.

8. Lighting: Two twelve-arm brass chandeliers having globular shaped frosted glass shades with etched decoration are suspended from the ceiling. Originally kerosene-burning, they have been converted to electricity. A glass bracket lamp with large sized burner, clear glass chimney, and brass fixtures is attached to each of the eight columns supporting the gallery. These lamps, never converted, still burn

kerosene. On either side of the platform, standing on a pedestal, is a sinumbra-type lamp whose kerosene burner has been replaced with an electric-light fixture. Each has a square base, tall stem, and a combination shade and chimney (globose below, narrowing above to form a chimney). At the center of the rail, behind the lectern, stands a long-stemmed or "pillar" brass lamp, taller than the two side lamps. This three-arm glass-shaded lamp has been electrified.

9. Heating: Modern propane gas heating. The church also has a modern air conditioning system.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The front door of the building faces SSE. There is a cemetery immediately in front of the entrance which contains approximately 1500 graves (the first was that of Robert Frierson, who died in 1808).
2. Enclosures: A wrought-iron picket fence encloses the church and cemetery grounds.
3. Walks: Through a gate northeast of the church, a concrete walk four feet wide and a road eight feet wide enter the grounds and swing southwest. The walk ends at the east side of the front stairs, with an offshoot to the basement door. The road swings by the front of the church. There is also a remnant of a brick walk beside the building, between the two most northerly windows on the east side.
4. Monuments: East of the building, there is a marker in memory of Watkins Dixon, founder of the endowed cemetery.
5. Landscaping: The site has many large old trees--loblolly or white pine, pitch pine, balsam fir, cedar, poplar, ash, locust, maple, cherry laurel, and magnolia--a number of mature boxwood bushes, and other shrubs.

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Summer 1971

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Spring 1977

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were made during the summer of 1971 as part of a cooperative project of the National Park Service, the Tennessee Historical Commission, and the Historic Sites Federation of Tennessee. The work represented the second phase of an extensive recording program to document the historic architecture of Middle Tennessee and involved the recording of structures in the counties surrounding Nashville.

The project was under the direction of James C. Massey, at that time Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Supervisor of the recording team was Prof. Roy C. Pledger of Texas A & M University. The team was composed of John W. Kiser, Architectural Historian (University of Tennessee); Daryl P. Fortier, Architect (University of Minnesota); and student architects Gilbert M. Glaubinger (Rhode Island School of Design), Steve P. Roberts (Ohio State University), and Barry S. Williams (Texas A & M University). Photographs were made by Jack E. Boucher, HABS staff photographer. Additional research was done in 1977 by Ursula Theobald, Writer-Editor, HABS, with generous assistance from Mrs. Cornelia Stephenson Brown, Zion Church Historian, and Mr. David Franklin Fulton, Clerk of the Zion Congregation, who consulted local sources to provide valuable information, particularly regarding alterations and additions made to the Zion Church building over the years.

Zion Church (Presbyterian)
State Route 1
Columbia
Maury County
Tennessee

HABS No. TN-64

HABS
TENN.
60-Colum.
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Addendum to:

Zion Church
Near Columbia
Maury County
Tennessee

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Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C.